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# CHILD WELFARE

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# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE AVERAGE CHILD

## HIS GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND REACTIONS\*

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**ALTHOUGH** abundant knowledge exists about growth and development of infants and children, there are yet vast areas to be explored. The reasons for this paucity of information are several. In studying the human individual and his behavior one must deal with many variables and cannot eliminate most of these nor set up control situations comparable to experimental studies in the exact sciences. Of necessity, many studies dealing with growth and development of the human being have to be clinical in nature and results of such investigations are open to criticism from scientifically minded individuals. Yet, when research projects are set up to meet these criticisms, the area of study is frequently narrowed to but one segment or cross-section of an individual's life and one soon becomes aware of the fact that the sum of the parts studied does not truly constitute the total human being. Obviously new methods which meet the critical appraisal of scientifically minded individuals must be formulated.

Another reason for the absence of adequate data is the cost of any research venture in this field, the expense in time and money. Only a relatively small amount of money has been forthcoming from public and private sources to stimulate and carry on research in the field of growth and development, and of personality development. Another reason for our insufficient information is that we have few persons trained in this kind of research. The personnel required must not only be adequately and well trained technically but should have an understanding of themselves to keep to a minimum their psychological, as well as their technical blindspots. The literature is filled with conflicting opinions about development in children, their rearing and their care. Even among the experts, one finds swings of opinion from one extreme to another as culturally and socially, we as a people, go from one extreme to another in our plan for child rearing and child care. Fortunately, there is now a trend in the training of professional workers who deal with children; *i.e.*, pediatricians, psychiatrists, nurses, social workers and educators, emphasizing the need of each of these persons to know the facts of growth and development. This does not mean

that students in these fields should memorize the body of knowledge that we have about children, their traits and characteristics, but rather that they should have some understanding of the processes involved in growth and change, of the inter-relationship of the physical, psychological, intellectual and social components.

It has been found in my experience that the best way to teach such material is through providing opportunities for observation in nursery schools, elementary and secondary schools, well baby clinics and institutions where children live and are reared. Such observations should not be haphazard or for short periods of time alone, but frequent and for as long a period in the life of the child as can be arranged. Also, they should be under the direction and guidance of skilled persons in the field, who can point out to the student what should be observed and are able to stimulate group discussions and seminar teaching. Increasingly, it is being suggested that students in the field of medicine, social work, nursing and education spend a block of their time while training in residence with infants or children so that they may not only see the child through periods of twenty-four hours' care and see his day to day change, but also that they might get some feeling of appreciation of the role of the parent figure who has to care for and minister to the child for periods of twenty-four hours.

I should like here to point out certain general, yet important facts about growth and development. The first of these is that the human organism, like any other biological unit, is an indivisible entity. Significant to the individual are the peculiar characteristics of any part or function understood only in relation to the whole person. Furthermore, there is a correlation of physical, psychological, social and intellectual segments. This, of course, is seen beautifully in the young infant as he develops motor performance, which is partly physical, partly psychological and partly learning. He furthers his motor development by his curiosity and through his social relationships, particularly with his mother. The more opportunity he has of experimenting and being with people, the more his motor system is stimulated. This, as well as other facets of development such as language ability, speed up the greater when he has an

\* From spontaneous remarks at annual meeting of Child Welfare League of America, June, 1949.

opportunity of moving around and of satisfying his interest and his need to be with other people. Although growth proceeds regularly in terms of an over-all pattern for the individual, nevertheless it is characterized for each of us by stages of great irregularity. Some of this normal irregularity is seen when growth lags or slows down after a period of rapid or great advance as if to aid the organ systems to catch up with each other. Occasionally, one even witnesses a regression, particularly in psychological development. Such regressions often appear before advances in growth. Some of the irregularities are due also to the influences which affect every person, consisting of physical, psychological, cultural and social-economic factors. Each of these forces has different representative constituents. For example, the physical factor comprises such influences on each of us, such as bacteria and viruses, or as thermal factors, namely, heat and cold. There are chemical elements such as those in feeding and dietary spheres and also physical injury like birth trauma. The effects of psychological forces are felt as influences through contacts with the family, parents, siblings, grandparents, playmates, teachers, physicians and people in the community, the nurses and others who participate in the care of the individual from his pre-natal existence onward. The general cultural pattern may have such influences as those reflected in the current community attitudes towards child rearing and child care. As examples, take the beliefs and feelings about infant feeding, infant behavior, so-called problem behavior, and all of the taboos, folklore and misinformation which makes up the mores of our time.

The product of the inter-action between the individual organism and the forces just enumerated, will depend upon such factors as constitutional resistance or susceptibility, and the amount and combination of the impinging forces as well as the time of their impact, (i.e., whether the individual is an infant, child or adolescent) and whether the force comes singly or in various combinations. There may be a combination of influences such as death of the parent and financial insecurity together which may have a greater adverse effect than a single influence (loss of money) alone might have had. Also, the vulnerability of an individual as well as the behavioral response of the organism will depend in part on his phase of development when acted upon by these influences. For example, the infant and young child will usually tolerate the loss of objects or people less well than if he were older. The young infant reacts to deprivation with crying, finger-sucking, sleep disturbances and motor restlessness. His response is usually a total body response. He

puts his whole being into his demands. He reacts in a primitive manner, we say. In contrast, the child at the age of four years, usually responds differently, he tolerates frustration better; if he is hungry he asks for food; if it is not forthcoming he will demand it or try to get it for himself; but only then, if still unsuccessful, will he resort to an infantile response of crying, shrieking and motor restlessness. The last would be labeled a temper tantrum and considered in our culture a bad or unwholesome character trait and too often is handled by parents with punishment instead of with a more physiological response, in this instance, one of offering food.

The genesis of many of our so-called behavior problems is through just such a mechanism as this. The child makes a bid for a basic physiological need, his manner of expressing his need is unacceptable in terms of adult standards. The mores of our time demands discipline and control lest spoiling follow, and the result is the child is punished instead of being treated with understanding. His reaction sets up a chain of misbehavior, and the conflict which ensues between the child and the adult may go on for a long time. This affects the development of the child and often prevents the joyful satisfaction which comes to the adult in child rearing through a positive participation in his growth process.

Research workers appraising human growth through long-term longitudinal studies of living children, have found that each human being follows a general growth pattern yet at the same time demonstrates his own particular variation thereof. In spite of the individual differences one may, with surprising accuracy predict future development because of a constancy with which each person adheres to his own basic pattern. It is apparent that such prediction on a chronological basis alone, is usually much less accurate. For example, the foretelling the *exact* age of walking, teething or talking, cannot be done. The *sequences and phases* of dentition, of motor development and of behavior, however, may be prophesied for healthy children. Stating this differently, it may be said that the rhythm of development is more predictable than the rate.

It must be remembered that growth of each individual, while similar to that of his fellows in terms of his biologic and mammalian inheritance, nevertheless is individually different because of his personal heredity and because, as a human organism, he reacts differently to the influences described above. There are endless variations within the limits of the human pattern at all levels of development and in the process of maturation. It is important for us



to understand and to accept these individual differences which mark one individual from another. Psychologically, this is not easy; we tend to seek sameness and to identify with persons of our own kind.

### Focal Points of Development

There are periods of early life about which we have enough information to enable us to label them focal points. In considering these developmental epochs in the life of the individual, one must begin with conception. But about the physical and psychological structure of this, one can do little at present. Turning to the period of gestation, evidence is now abundant from both animal experimentation and human clinical records that nutritional deficiencies and physical disease of the mother, during the first months of pregnancy predispose to the malformations of the offspring. The first four months of pregnancy, then, are very vulnerable ones in terms of the physical development of the human being. It is fully recognized that the full pregnancy is fraught with potential psychological traumata or conversely with psychological beneficence, depending upon the maternal feelings and attitudes. These emotions do not have the cause-effect relationship of the maternal impression and fetal "marking" variety handed down in folklore but rather in a more subtle and intangible influence, which is so powerful that a major portion of this paper could be devoted to its discussion. At the New York Hospital, in the past few years, it has been customary to have pediatricians in the training period spend a portion of their time in the prenatal clinic or the obstetric department in order to learn from pregnant women through their questions about their attitudes regarding pregnancy, childbirth and child care. From an analysis of the clinical records obtained in this way, it is seen that the average woman has mixed emotions and attitudes about these events. There is often misinformation, apprehension, rational fear and irrational anxiety. Previous motherhood or professional experience is no insurance against concern and worry. The woman trained in medicine, nursing or social work loses her objectivity when she becomes a parent and a patient. Even a physician with abundant professional experience in medicine, when he becomes a father, has as great, if not greater concern about pathology in spite of (or because of) his medical background. What should concern us is that pregnancy is an emotional as well as a physical experience in every instance. It is of the greatest importance that the persons in attendance become aware of their opportunity to help the prospective parents

as no one else can, through listening, answering questions, reassuring and guiding. Such treatment constitutes psycho-therapy of the most potent variety and this is mental hygiene incorporated naturally into medicine, as it should be. Skilled social workers stand far advanced over their medical colleagues in appreciation of this. Our experience has been that prenatal guidance is good preparation for the birth and for the newborn periods. For example, infant feeding should be discussed before the birth of the baby when the mother raises questions about it. In this way, some problems of feeding may be prevented. Certainly, breast feeding can be more easily carried out when the techniques are discussed prenatally and when some of the problems are anticipated. This is in line with the trend toward more breast feeding and toward the rooming-in arrangement whereby the baby is brought to the bedside of the mother for longer and more frequent physical contact in the newborn period. Thus the baby shares the room with the mother and the breast feeding arrangement permits him to eat whenever his hunger demands it. Experiments in these techniques at Yale University will be followed with interest, and although in the future they may not be applicable in their entirety in general medical practice the aim of the experiments are basic.

Modern psychiatry emphasizes an old truth which many religions have taught for ages: namely, that the cornerstone of personality development or of character, is in the parent-child relationship, particularly the mother-child relationship in the first few years of life. Modern pediatrics and psychiatry have shown that the practices of feeding in infancy have great significance in setting up good or bad parent relationships. The giving of food to an infant provides not only calories, but also emotional pleasure and satisfaction, thus permitting the establishment of a good bond of affection early in the life of the child which should help both mother and child through the periods of trial and tribulation which appear in all child rearing. The young infant is dependent and self-centered in his instinctive search for things supplying his basic needs. During this period, the mouth is the organ used chiefly to relate the infant to the outside world. The mouth is used for pleasure as well as to express feelings such as aggression and anger. It is also used for exploration and therefore, it is now accepted that thumb-sucking, biting and putting things into mouth are normal activities of infancy. In fact, if the infant should not have done these things, he often does not enjoy his food nor does he show interest in things about him as one would wish him to.

As another example of a focal point in child de-

velopment, the period around 5 months measures a sort of crisis or turning point in development. Up to then, there is impatience if needs are not promptly met and the appearance of ego-centricity seems to pre-dominate; but at about 5 months the picture changes and a more positive attitude or outlook emerges with greater tolerance for frustration, more patience in waiting to have needs satisfied. This psychological change accompanies physical changes, particularly greater sensory development and most notably in terms of greater perception and acuity of hearing. However, it is only in healthy and well-cared-for infants that this development proceeds as one would like. The period around five months is also important in terms of intellectual and social growth. Social irritants as well as physical factors will now give him pain and displeasure. As the infant grows, particularly as he approaches his first birthday and goes into the second year of his life, he relates himself socially still more to objects outside of himself, to persons other than himself and the mother. This phase is characterized in our culture by the beginning of a gradual psychological and physical weaning from the mother. It is a period of stress and strain because of this and because the infant is learning many new abilities, particularly in motor performance and talking, and also because he is being trained in new techniques, such as feeding himself and toilet training, about which he has mixed feelings. In this emancipation, the infant's impressions of the outside world are gained through his body functions, especially eating, bowel and bladder evacuations as related to the role of the parents, particularly the mother, who participates in redirecting these instinctual, biological, yet highly personalized activities in terms of the culture in which the child will live. The infant is interested in his excretions, and evacuation satisfies biological and also psychological needs. There is now evidence that toilet training is accomplished most satisfactorily if not begun too early nor forcibly. Children resent or resist early and rigorous training. They will resort to sustained or periodic wetting and soiling, or to episodic holding back of feces or urine, and to fecal smearing for as long as several years, if training is started before they are able to sit unsupported, before they understand what is expected of them and when they misinterpret the training as punishment or parental displeasure or disapproval. Clinically, one may also see such regression in children who are institutionalized or reared in other such places where they are treated in a routine or regimented manner.

In the pre-school period, from 2 to 5 years, the child is more keenly aware of himself as a person

different from others. There are further attempts now to emancipate himself from his parents, particularly the parent of his own sex, and this struggle is akin to the drive which will be seen later in adolescence. The child moves ahead eagerly in gestures of independence, yet holds back in fear, as if in danger of losing his parents. The pre-school child is able to verbalize this fear and talks about the possibility of losing his parents; he may resist separation from them, particularly at night. He talks of death, sleeps poorly and has nightmares. These characteristics—disturbed dreams, fears and anxieties—of the pre-school period are so prevalent that today they are considered everyday behavior of the normal or average child. As he grows older he gives up many of these fears or at least talks about them less and sublimates them through school activities. As a school-child, he finds gratification in learning, in the development of skills and in developing special aptitudes. He becomes interested in hobbies; and makes friendships with groups of children of similar age and interests. The period of school age is usually less hazardous in terms of physical illness and, except for psychological problems relating to the school situation and learning, the school period as a rule contains fewer behavioral difficulties than the pre-school phases of development or the on-coming puberty and adolescence.

These last focal points of puberty and adolescence will be mentioned only briefly. Puberty is attended by spurts of growth, increased and fluctuant metabolism and changes in blood chemistry, particularly in calcium and nitrogen balances and hormone content. It is no wonder that the physical organism, then, is easily undermined in the pubertal period and becomes prey to tuberculosis, nutritional deficiencies, anaemia and endocrine disturbances. As a corollary of these physical diseases and physical change, psychological imbalance frequently develops and runs concomitantly, may even persist for several years after physical changes have ceased.

Adolescence exemplifies the fact that growth itself, although normal and spontaneous, may be attended by anxiety in the average person. Many of the somatic complaints seen in this period are the results of normal anxieties. The adolescent whose body changes so drastically is filled with misgivings about his health, and each discomfort may be mistakenly interpreted as disease. Physicians, teachers and social workers more than parents, are able to help such adolescents by correcting misinterpretations and misconceptions, by listening sympathetically and with reassurance. Contrary-wise, parents and professional persons alike, may increase fears by over-emphasizing disease and ill-health by disregarding

the natural differences in persons, through fostering the notion that there is uniformity of body development and physical prowess in the so-called normal; and by demanding physical and psychological aptitudes, which for one reason or another are unphysiological for the person.

### **The Needs of Children for Optimal Growth**

Up to now development has been presented as a dynamic process depicting the child as a living, changing and growing biological entity, developing and maturing through the inter-action with a multi-dimensional environment made up of family, physical space and the natural world (and organized society with distinct cultural patterns). The adult develops natural traits which mark him as the individual he is because of the pattern of his early life experiences.

Children need homes. This was proved with children in many ways in peace time and again during the last war. Children separated from parents demonstrate symptoms of physical disfunction and of emotional difficulty. Whether the foster home is large or small, is immaterial as long as the elements of family life and family living can be established and maintained. The amount of trauma the child suffers from being away from his parents and his own home will depend upon the degree to which this can be done. The old controversy of institutional care versus foster home care need not be reviewed here, but it may not be remiss to emphasize again that infants are particularly vulnerable to environmental influences which interfere with a good mother-child relationship. For example, a hospitalized infant often sleeps less, passes more stool, is more liable to respiratory infections than the infant at home. Also there is a dulling of response to emotional stimuli as shown by absence of smiling and delay or distortion in other developments. One must think twice then, before separating the infant or child from an environment where he can get good, intimate contact with a mother or a mother figure.

The small child has little notion of physical causality but relationships are mainly moral and personal. Things happen in order to keep people good or to punish people because they are bad. The morality of the child is an intensely severe and strict one. Frequently the child shows this in his dramatic play and he feels that his parents are either ideally or terribly severe in inflicting punishment. All that is happening seems to be the outcome of the goodness or badness—the lovingness or cruelty of his parents or the parent-figure in charge of him. Children may be well fed and well housed but if

treated indifferently and without warm human contact of people, they respond as though the environment were cruel.

What the child will become as an adult citizen is determined quite as much by his feelings and his appreciation of the people around him as by his physical and medical care and schooling opportunities. Children become socially adapted to our real world and appear to be self-controlled in co-operation with others, not by virtue of what they are taught in words but by living experiences with people, by absorbing the patterns of behavior shown in the personalities who care for them. The child judges his father, mother and teacher by their behavior and emotional attitudes. It is almost trite today that the child's first need is affection: that is, experiencing loving care either from his parents or those who take over the parental functions.

In closing, I would like to take you back where I started. I said that little was known about the development of children, that there is a need for greater effort in this direction. In our concern with children we often despair. Historical review shows this concern is an old one. An Egyptian priest said about 4000 B.C., "Our earth is degenerate in these latter days. There are signs that the world is coming to an end. Children no longer obey their parents; everybody wants to write a book." Or to quote Socrates: "Children now, love luxury, they have bad manners, contempt for authority. They show disrespect for elders, love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not servants of their households. They no longer rise when their elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs and tyrannize their teachers."

Let us so-called moderns, then, not despair, but join hands professionally and with the best means we can command, do the work that needs to be done.

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# THE PARENT'S ROLE IN LONG-TIME CARE\*

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MRS. GORDON'S statement is indeed a very graphic one of our confusions and dilemmas in giving long-time care. Probably in all of our agencies there are illustrations similar to those she cited. You would all agree that these illustrations are indications of our own confusions that make for "planless long-time care," as well as an indictment of parents who show "little consistent interest." I wonder whether the fact is, in reality, that too often we let long-time placement happen without benefit of plan, and without maximum usefulness and helpfulness to parent and child.

Mrs. Gordon indicated that child placement began as a service to give shelter to those children whose own parents could not provide it. Then, through our experience and development in the child welfare field, we came to recognize that in child placement we have an opportunity to help the individuals involved to develop personally satisfying and socially useful lives. I think the implications of this casework aspect very significant, and so I shall limit my discussion to a consideration of its meaning and of the need for structures to implement it.

Child placement is extremely complicated, for its basic child-care responsibilities are inextricably interwoven with its casework service responsibility. With the parent, our goal is to help him carry his parental responsibilities, derive satisfaction from his parenthood through placement, yet let his child benefit from living in a foster home. For the child, it is to help him grow and develop in the medium of a foster home, yet help him keep that which is significant and beneficial in his relationships with his own parents. Whether we see the placement service as a means for compensating the child for the loss of his own home, or whether we see in it an opportunity for helping the child and the parent, is revealed in our casework process with them.

Our work with the child shows an ever-developing awareness of his needs and their relationship to the fact of his placement, and we have achieved some skill in this direction. Gradually there is evolving a

recognition of the parent's role at intake; the parent must be helped to consider the usefulness of his child's placement to him, the validity of the service for his child, and for how long service may be needed for his child.

At intake in our agency we establish the understanding that the parent's continuing relationship with the caseworker is a requisite for care. The first three months or so of placement are utilized by the worker with the parent to determine, through the actual experience, the usefulness of the placement to the parents, its validity as a means of caring for the particular child, and whether the agency can continue to make placement available, based on the parent's and the child's needs and their use of it. At intake there is usually possible some definition of the plan for care, confirmed or shifted at the end of the initial period. But rarely does it have a final, conclusive quality when continuing care is indicated. In New York City a recently completed study of children awaiting admission into foster care agencies, bore out the belief that for most children in need of more than immediate care it is difficult to determine "foreseeable termination" of placement. There is some question whether a conclusive plan can be established when placement is more than just an immediate brief plan. Placement is part of a continuous experience and is subject to all the changes that flow from a living situation to which we must be unflaggingly alert.

Intake and discharge periods have momentum that press themselves upon us for consideration; but the period of placement takes on a different rhythm. For the parent of the child remaining in care, the initial impact of the meaning of his separation from his child is to some degree diminished. If the child settles down in any way, there can be a diminution or quiescence of guilt for the parent. And for the parent whose relationship with his child was not too positive or gratifying, his ties to his child in placement can readily become more tenuous and more confusing. For example:

Sammy Manning came into our care 8 years ago when he was not quite 3. He was born of an extra-marital relationship. His mother's widow's pension had been withdrawn shortly after his birth, which precipitated the placement of two older half-siblings. Sammy, however, remained with his mother. Only after almost

\* Discussion of paper "Long-Time Care" which appeared in *CHILD WELFARE*, January 1950. The panel discussion by Henrietta L. Gordon, Margaret Barbee and Elizabeth K. Radinsky was presented at Eastern Regional Conference of Child Welfare League of America, April, 1949.



3 years of struggle to maintain herself and her child did she request care for the child. Possible length of care was discussed with her but she could not relate it at all to her request for placement, which had come out of her desperation when she had not been able to use the help of the family agency. In many ways Mrs. Manning had shown herself an inept mother, although she showered Sammy with affection. As she saw it, there was nothing ahead for her. She was only certain that she wanted Sammy as her child and would not relinquish him. On the basis of the discussion with the mother, a long-term home was selected.

During the first 6 months Sammy seemed to make an adjustment, and his mother visited fairly regularly. He was occasionally permitted to visit in his own home but this permission was withdrawn when his behavior after such visits was too much for the foster mother to cope with. Gradually the regular contacts with the worker became less and less frequent, until Mrs. Manning did not even respond to appointment letters. There were longer lapses between her visits to the home. Because of her irregular visiting, adoption was periodically discussed with her, but each time she was adamant in her refusal.

At the age of 9 we saw Sammy, in spite of all the ups and downs in his relationships with the foster family, accepted by them as one of them. Their fondness for him was very apparent, but so also was their concern with his "unwillingness" to be as one of them. He was not ready to participate in his share of little household duties. He expressed liking of the family but was nevertheless "aloof." During this time Sammy, who had seemed clear as a little fellow regarding his own family relationships, now expressed confusion in many different ways. By this time the caseworker had to seek out Mrs. Manning. After much effort the worker succeeded in re-establishing the beginnings of a relationship toward helping her in relation to Sammy, in whom she still indicated warm interest. She then began to visit more regularly, and to participate in plans for the child. Sammy again has some semblance of his own family, and has gradually, in the past 2 years, been able to participate more in his foster family's living. He seems to be deriving satisfaction from both sources. True, it was not easy for his foster family to accept the return of Sammy's family, and there had to be painstaking work with them all along the way. It was their desperation and their liking for Sammy that sharpened the problem for the agency. Their concern for Sammy was a factor in their being helped from being pseudo parents to becoming foster parents sharing Sammy with his own family, with the agency serving to help them to an understanding of their role.

In regard to foster parents we have learned that they do not become foster parents by virtue of an agency's acceptance of their home as a foster home; but rather that the agency has to help them to the full meaning of foster parenthood in the course of the child's placement with them.

The care Sammy had received from his mother was questionable, and as time went on, there appeared to be further deterioration of care. Mrs. Manning confirmed our feeling that he needed long-term care. Yet, right from the beginning Sammy had looked to his mother for certain parent-child satisfactions. Perhaps if we had had a continuing relationship with Mrs. Manning, as the mother of Sammy, something else might have happened. It does seem that once Sammy knew his own family had not completely rejected him, he could more beneficially use much that was good in the foster family.

Mrs. Gordon stated that casework in child welfare is predicated upon two essential beliefs: a belief in the capacity of the parent to change and grow; and the belief in his right to decide what he wants for his child in care. Our casework role must reveal our belief in the possibility of change and growth through the help given the parent, and must be reflected in our work with him throughout the stay of his child in placement. The parent has to be helped in the course of and through the experience of his child in placement, if we are to help him with whatever his potentialities are to carry his parental responsibilities.

When Mr. Schor, 4 years ago, came in to request placement of his two children (Fay, 11, and Martin, 5), he was too distraught to discuss any kind of plan. His wife had died in childbirth 3 months before, and he could no longer continue with his attempts to care for his children at home. He presented himself as one who had relied completely on his wife to carry all the responsibilities of the family. During her lifetime he had not even been able to sustain consistently his role as wage earner.

The Shelter Placement, preliminary to the admission of the children into their foster homes, served to relax some of his tensions; but it still was not possible to carry through any discussion regarding plans. Mr. Schor hoped that possibly, when his children grew up, he would be able to take them home. It was hard for Mr. Schor to see that he as the father had meaning to the children. The children were frightened of their father, who seemed to ignore them, not letting them know what was being planned for or happening to them. At intake, efforts were directed toward helping him tell the children why he had to request placement for them. Mr. Schor was as fearful of the children as they were of him. It seemed as if their mother had completely served as the intermediary between the children and their father, and there was little direct relationship between them. The casework with the father over the years was a gradual process, one of helping him find his role as a father. Mr. Schor had great conflict regarding this role. The caseworker had to bear his resentment when he became angry about having to meet the responsibility of regular visiting, of planning with the worker when visits were to be made, of taking the children to their own home for the holidays, of making special educational arrangements, etc. The worker recognized that Mr. Schor had had little opportunity to use himself as a father and see himself as the one responsible for his children. Although he would express anger when plans were discussed, there was also obvious gratefulness and satisfaction in being considered the father of these children. It was also apparent in his developing relationship with his children that he was using some of what he was working on with the caseworker. His relationship with the children became freer and more real, more gratifying to him and his children. By the time Fay was almost 15, he was ready to take home not only Fay, but Marty too, aged 9. He was ready to take on more complete responsibility for his children, and found in himself capacities to care for the children in such a way as to meet more satisfyingly his own and his children's needs, even in the face of new problems to be considered.

Concurrently, of course, there had to be casework with each of the children and with their foster parents. There were lags in the continuity of the casework related to change of workers. In the first two

*(Continued on page 12)*

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

### Looking Ahead in 1950

**T**AKING inventory is a good old custom at the beginning of a new year and we of the League are presently engaged in that sober and sobering undertaking. Looking squarely at things as they emerge from those shadowy areas called "Pending," where many troubling issues have remained too long in hiding, we see new aspects to old concerns, we recognize a goodly stock of new ones. Some are necessarily rooted in the old, some freshly sprung from changing times.

A sobering undertaking, yes, but also a stimulating one, as we recognize definite achievements, certainly not as many or as shining as we might wish, but still achievements providing essential encouragement for setting new goals for ourselves.

Setting goals, which is important, requires more of us than simply identifying "major concerns," a favorite occupation. We must redefine our role and redirect it in light of changing conditions. This requires a comprehensive review of the past so we can make discriminating use of our experience in frank scrutiny of the present, and in choosing paths for the future. This is because we see the role of the League as a changing one to meet a period that has already had some serious impact on child welfare standards and so far shows danger of increasing threat.

In order to deal effectively with this danger, to provide the kind of leadership and the kind of service our membership has requested of us, this scrutiny, this redefining and reshaping, is imperative. As one example, we cite the pressing need to devise specific means whereby League and membership will become more dynamically related than they are, whereby more fluent communication and wider representation will be facilitated, whereby formulation of policy and procedure, planning programs and setting standards will result from more active participation of membership as well as of board and staff. Furthermore, the League has a potential membership among the hundreds of child caring agencies in the country which must be taken into account. National child welfare needs these agencies and they need the League.

The early phases of our existence demanded pioneering and pioneer we did. We recognize that in various parts of the country this same kind of pioneering is still demanded but we also recognize that up and down the land we now have competent leaders who know what good child welfare standards

are. They can and do take considerable responsibility for promoting and sustaining adequate service in their communities as well as in their own agencies. This is true of our stronger private and public agencies alike. Our role then must shift, must be measured in terms of the advance these leaders on a local level are making so we may be of the strongest possible assistance to each.

Like other private agencies, our job here should be to underwrite programs on the firm basis of national knowledge and experience, tried and tested, to supplement through consultation designed to stimulate development rather than to direct it. Such consultation should, for example, help the local leadership, both lay and professional, to make their own decisions with greater knowledge and understanding of what "adequate" child welfare standards actually entail in the light of existing community conditions. It should strengthen and further local responsibility for making constructive change.

Over and above this, the League has another job in the areas of exploration, of helping in experiments, of testing and confirming new advances in child welfare, of getting the technical facts.

Finally, and possibly more than ever before, it is absolutely necessary that the League, as a voluntary association speaking for children, stand firmly for the basic principles which we have often heralded in these columns.

We require a closer working relationship with our membership. But we also require that our members, all of them, take their own strong stand in affirming the conviction that these principles which we hold, the ideals we strive for as a federation, are essential to progressive child care programs of the future. Such affirmation requires, in turn, uncompromising refusal to yield to new pressures and consistent belief that together we shall find new ways to meet today's problems.

SPENCER H. CROOKES

### Edith L. Lauer Joins Staff

**T**HE League is pleased to announce that Edith L. Lauer, formerly the Executive Director of the Baltimore Jewish Family and Children's Bureau, who for the past year was on the part-time staff as special consultant, is now on the full-time staff as Field Consultant. At present, in addition to field service, a portion of her time will be devoted to a review of League Standards in preparation for future discussion with our membership.

# RECORDING A CHILD'S PROGRESS IN THE DAY NURSERY

*Dorothy H. Beers*

THE goal of the day nursery in aiding children to develop their maximum potentialities is realized only if the adults responsible for the guidance of the children constantly evaluate and measure the children's progress. Meaningful recording of child behavior and gains is an essential part of this evaluation process. Such records used by the teacher as a means of analyzing her program and techniques, and by the caseworker in helping parents with family relationships, become also an invaluable part of the mounting evidence of the mental hygiene aspects of a day care program.

In developing a guide for the writing of records on children, the use which will be made of it must be a prime consideration. Who is to use it, for what purpose, under what conditions, where it will be kept, are factors that will help determine what points of information need to be covered in the record.

The record guide presented below was developed by the teachers and the case worker at the Bethany Day Nursery, New York City. From the process of this development grew a deepened insight into the meaning of children's behavior, and a heightened mutual appreciation of the functions of the teachers and case worker. Teachers thus were enabled to record more meaningfully because of their understanding of the uses to be made of the written material.

NAME OF CHILD                      DATE OF BIRTH:  
DATE OF RECORD:                  DATE ENROLLED IN CENTER:  
AGE:                                  DATE ENROLLED IN PRESENT GROUP:

## I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

1. Physical Appearance
2. General Health
3. Disabilities: Speech, Eyes, Teeth, Gait
4. Mood
5. Energy
6. Coordination and Speech

## II. INITIAL ADJUSTMENT

## III. SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

1. Personal Relationships
  - a. Attitude and Behavior Toward: Children, Teachers, Parents, Visitors
2. Degree of Self-responsibility (Routines)
3. Alertness to Environment
4. Conversations
5. Nervous Habits

## IV. PLAY PATTERN

1. Interests
 

Check List: Solitary Play, Group Play, House Play, Creative Play:  
Block building, etc., Music-Stories-  
Painting, etc.

Descriptive Summary of Outstanding Interests
2. Special Skills
3. Use of Equipment
4. Indoor and Outdoor Play
5. Interest Span
6. Conversation

## V. AREAS OF RESISTANCE

1. When does he show resistance and to whom?  
Routines, play activities, entering or leaving group  
To Teacher, Children, Parent, Student
2. Fears
3. Ways of Meeting Conflicts
4. How He Comforts Himself (Nervous habits)

## VI. GAINS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

## VII. SUMMARY OF TOTAL PICTURE

## VIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Parent-teacher contacts, etc.

## IX. HOW CAN HE BE HELPED

1. Needs in Terms of Materials
2. Needs in Terms of Personal Relationships
3. Needs in Terms of Activity or Rest
4. Recommendations for Handling

## CHECK LIST

### WAYS OF MEETING ANXIETY, DISAPPOINTMENT, STRAIN OR CONFLICT

(i.e. How the child relieves, comforts or protects himself)

wants to be held	cries loudly
wants adult near	cries in anger
needs affection	cries in sorrow
wants reassurance	cries by himself
wants to make amends	laughs instead of cries
wants to be alone	loses appetite
cuddles favorite toy	wants food or candy
sucks thumb or fingers	urinates more frequently
rocks or swings	vomits
retreats into his own world	sleeps restlessly
	sleeps heavily
hits	day dreams
kicks	wants to talk it over
bites	does not want to talk it over
spits	turns to something else
scratches	understands situation
throws	adjusts realistically
has tantrum	lets off steam in violent action
breaks	plans or plots revenge
pulls hair	feels easily hurt

### SATISFACTIONS AND ENJOYMENT

water	hammering
sand	digging
mud	rough housing
clay	exploring
finger paints	swimming
animals	being with adults
plants	being with children
birds	being read to
insects	reading to himself
color	playing house
painting	doll play
singing	dressing up
instruments	clowning
rhythms	humor
dramatics	affection & being liked
block building	appreciation & approval
carpentry	telling stories
science	make believe
crafts	asking questions
language	sharing ideas
balancing	solving problems
climbing	directing activities
swinging	taking trips
riding	collecting
ball play	acquiring new skills
running	new experiences



## THE PARENT'S ROLE IN LONG-TIME CARE

*(Continued from page 8)*

years of placement there were four different workers, and then one worker in the last two years, who carried through the experimental discharge period. There were other ups and downs. Essentially, however, there was both acceptance of Mr. Schor and belief in his potentialities for his development as a different kind of parent to his children.

In our agency, 86% of the children have parents or responsible relatives actively involved with us in the care of the agency. If a parent has meaning for the child he cannot be ignored, and must be helped with his role of parenthood. The longer the period of placement, the harder it is for the parent to sustain his part. There are agency changes and staff changes, as well as those for the parent, children and foster parents. The agency, therefore, has to be clear, as to its responsibility not only to the child but also to the parent. It must have specific structures that enable the worker to help the parent find his role as parent to his child in placement. There must be a structure that enables a regular review with the parent of the basis for placement, which should stem of course from a continuous relationship with him. He needs to be helped meeting his financial responsibility in accordance with the changes in his income and financial resources; with what is expected of him in visiting, the regularity, the quality of it, and the acceptable of minimal visiting as well as the maximum that is permitted. His role in giving operative consents should be clear. He has a very important and significant part to play when his child is in need of special services whether these are educational (religious and secular), psychological or psychiatric. The parent has to be accessible if he wants to sustain his significance to his child. This cannot be achieved through protracted periods of living out-of-state or at longer distances that do not permit regular visiting. The structures have to be such as to both help the parent and protect the child, and to make possible the continuous development of the child in relation to his parent, yet supplemented by all that is healthy and good in the foster home. Attaining these ends demands consistent casework with the foster parents, who find it is not easy to share the child's care, not only with the agency but with the parents. Yet in view of the children to whom we are giving placement service today, most of them with interested parents, we do still have to find our way in this area.

I think it important to mention one more point: that of caseload. If we see our responsibility as one

not only to the child but to his parent, our caseload count must take cognizance of this fact.

Whether a child is with us for a short time or a long time, foster home care must stem from the bases of need for placement, the quality of the parent-child relationships and the concomitant help to the foster family. Whatever the plan for care, no matter how fraught with difficulty, if it is rooted in clarity for the child in relation to his own parent and the foster parent, there is that much more chance of finding whatever is beneficial and helpful to each. Seeing the parents problem realistically in longtime care is part of the problem of helping the parent and the child in placement as a continuous process, as long as the parent does not planfully relinquish his parenthood, and only as long as he and the child need the placement service. Then we will know whether a parent can change, and how he can take on various degrees of his responsibilities of parenthood. Then, too, we can know how the service we offer in foster home care can contribute beneficially toward the child's total needs.

### What's New in Child Welfare?

THE Program Committee of the Child Welfare League of America decided to reserve one of the League's sessions at the forthcoming National Conference of Social Work for a look at what is NEW in child welfare.

We would like to have for that session on Tuesday morning, April 25, brief reports by five agencies on NEW developments in the field, with discussion from the floor.

We are looking for something NEW in board participation, or in temporary care; NEW patterns in cooperation between public and private agencies or in agency mergers; NEW approaches to home finding or to fee charging. Has something NEW been added to emergency shelter care, to homemaker services or day care? What is NEW in group care or in service to adolescents? Who has found NEW ways in community interpretation? Is there a NEW role for boarding parents in the agency setting? Do we have NEW uses for the subsidized boarding homes? Is there NEW life in protective services?

If you think you have a ten-minute story to give us an account of something NEW in child welfare, or if you know of somebody else who can do so, please drop us a line. And please do it right now.

GUNNAR DYBWAD

*Chairman*

# ON FINDING FOSTER HOMES

Edith L. Lauer

*How we go about finding foster homes. Does the shortage prevalent in many communities necessarily indicate that the "saturation point" has been reached? If so, why?*

\* "TWELVE Queens College sociology students yesterday received the official thanks of the Department of Welfare for their service during the last two months as volunteer canvassers in search of foster homes for children.

"You have not only done a distinct service in telling people of the foster home plan," Commissioner Raymond M. Hilliard told the students who met with him in the college president's office, "but you have also been the first group of students to cooperate actively with a department of government in working on a most difficult problem."

"Since late October . . . the students have visited about 3500 homes in the South Ozone Park area of Queens. The students explain the foster care program to householders, explaining that youngsters now in hospitals or shelters because of broken homes would be put in their care temporarily and their board paid by the Department of Welfare. The canvassers' job has been to arouse interest, not to sign up prospective foster parents.

"Out of these visits," Albert Solomon, case supervisor of the department's program, said, "we received hundreds of inquiries and have boiled them down to twenty-five applications, a very high percentage in our experience. And we know that six months from now we'll still be getting inquiries and applications from the area."

"It was found necessary to stress two factors: . . . You have to teach people that they will not have the child permanently. The necessity for taking time to study the home was also stressed. . . . Misunderstanding of this is the great deterrent.

"So rewarding has the experience been," Mr. Solomon said, "that Hunter College sociology students have been champing at the bit to start their own canvass. An indoctrination meeting is scheduled there for January 25 so that students can start ringing doorbells during their between-semester vacation . . ."

This bit of news reported by the NEW YORK HERALD-TRIBUNE seems particularly apropos at a time when we of the League have been so keenly aware of the difficult problems agencies are facing in finding enough foster homes to meet their needs. As we go about the country and have the chance to talk to boards and staffs, we find this problem out front in almost every instance.

There are, of course, variations but the theme remains the same; not enough homes for babies which hampers the adoption service; not enough homes for 'teen agers which hampers the program of short-term care; not enough homes for children whose problems cannot be met by the "average" family home but who do not require institutional treatment, which hampers the program for a specialized foster

home service; not enough homes for temporary care during the initial stages of placement, thus hampering the agency's efforts to afford parent and child a realistic basis for their proper share in planning next steps.

In short, an adequate number of adequate foster homes is not found very often. The spectre of this shortage may take different forms in different agencies but it stalks with like effect.

It is safe to say that few, if any agencies have developed methods of home finding that they can call altogether satisfying, nor are we prepared as yet to say there is one "best" method. It is obvious that differences in community conditions will necessarily shape different methods but it is also obvious that home finding problems have certain characteristics that remain the same everywhere and are easily identifiable as common denominators.

Workers in child placing agencies, harassed by the dogging need to get children out of "untenable" situations when no "tenable" situations are in prospect, have all too intimate a knowledge of these common denominators and the burden of frustration and discouragement they impose. There is the universal cry for more effective explanation of the services our children are entitled to and more positive recognition of the dignity and significance of foster parenthood as a calling. There is much discomfort about board rates and board rates must remain a universal factor in home finding. There are the universal problems of comfortable homes telescoped into crowded tenements by housing shortages, of mothers taking on extra jobs in the world of industry, of entirely new tensions in our day-by-day living peculiar to these post-Hiroshima times.

Last but not in any way the least, is the anxiety produced by just plain lack of time to work on the problem, a common denominator indeed, as there is general agreement that finding new homes, in adequate numbers and of adequate calibre, constitutes a major challenge with which most agencies are struggling.

Some agencies are able to maintain a year round home finding activity through the combined efforts of public relations experts, board, and staff. Some agencies assign the home finding job to one special worker who will carry responsibility for discovering

\* News item from *Herald Tribune*, December 21, 1949.

new leads and following them up, with some help from publicity ranging from a consistently planned program, consistently carried out, to the flash-in-the-pan variety of advertising, dependent on the state of the agency exchequer, or on the mounting pressures of waiting lists. The nature of this advertising can be highly emotional, featuring the unattainable ideal and quickening the impulsive, highly emotional response, seldom if ever useful to the agency. Or, just the reverse, a cool, business proposition is presented that tends to freeze the warm interest of readers who might otherwise have developed a fertile curiosity about the agency and its services to children.

Other agencies conduct a high-powered campaign every so often, sometimes jointly with other agencies, sometimes in solo flight; sometimes employing the banners and barges of commercial advertising and sometimes not. Some find their own foster parents are the most effective recruiting officers, and rely on regular group meetings to keep interest alive in addition to the individual caseworker's reiteration of the need for homes. This implies a sense of security in agency-foster parent relationships greatly to be coveted. In addition to all of the above, many agencies have raised their board rates, perhaps, with more hope for results than is warranted.

However, some agencies can do no real planning at all about their home finding problems but try meeting them as they go along, catch-as-catch can, even to entering into the dismal enterprise of "putting on my hat and going out to find a home for Dickie" because he must be placed next week, or this week—or even tomorrow! Finally, and this is sad, agencies must permit infants and pre-school children to go into institutions, not because they believe this is right but because they are saying no more boarding homes will be forthcoming. They are sounding that dreadful dirge—"We've reached the saturation point."

Have we reached the saturation point? Must we give up? Are we ready now to abandon standards long since heralded as a bare minimum? Is it necessarily true that changing conditions in family living will force our foster home service to shrink out of proportion to its usefulness? Are we ready to face other and perhaps more fundamental factors?

We believe New York City seeks answer to some of these questions. The Department of Public Welfare has come to grips with the frightening spectre of foster home shortages, courageously experimenting with the hitherto untried resources of a vast local student body for a project that openly spells optimism, spells determination to hold those standards we must continue to cherish. But the optimism is tempered with a realistic approach which is also

courageous. The report bears out the need for better general understanding, the need for time, the fallacy of expecting quantitative results immediately. From 3500 visits "*we received hundreds of inquiries and have boiled them down to 25 applications . . . 6 months from now we'll still be getting inquiries and applications from the area.*" This speaks for itself.

The kind of people we seek for our foster parents will think more than twice before deciding anything, and especially before making the radical decision to take the "child of strangers" into their homes.

We must point out also the charge given these youthful canvassers. "*. . . to arouse interest, not to sign up prospective foster parents.*" This is wisely designed to avoid the highpowered salesmanship that yields but barren harvest and only serves to intensify the "misunderstanding" referred to with such feeling in the article. The fact that the department plans to keep on working along similar lines indicates a conviction that it cannot rest on the laurels of one project, however daring, and that some well planned, well organized, continuous effort to arouse interest in the most appropriate public must become part of the agency program.

Here then, are answers to a few of the common questions. Each seems to carry its special significance that agencies will welcome and can utilize. However, there are other factors to plague and perplex, other questions to which answers must be forthcoming because keeping the appropriate public appropriately informed must remain only one part of the home finding effort. All aspects of agency operation impinge upon and influence the home finding to a large extent. Thus clarity in the approach to the community, essential as it is, must go hand-in-hand with clarity in the agency's concept of service, an interdependence not to be overlooked. This is so because "the foster home," as one of the agency's most important resources, becomes valuable in direct ratio to the nature of its relationship to the agency and this relationship in turn must depend upon agency policy and the way it is carried out in practice.

This brings us up short before those questions still remaining. The most compelling of these must lead to the very core of the agency program, its purpose and planning, the ideas that shape policy and case work practice, the basic concepts of what is expected of foster parents, of parents, of case workers. For example, many aspects of boarding care have changed as we learn more and more about what separation means to parent and child and about the inner significance of infant and child development. The general trend toward shorter periods of care changes the foster parents' role. Seeing the child about to leave his own home as an anxious



child who may "misbehave" versus the out-moded Little Lord Fauntleroy, bringing happiness as he crosses the threshold, also changes the foster parents' role, just as this recognition changes the role of the case worker, of the parents, of the child himself. Seeing the foster parents as human beings with their own human needs is also important. Does actual practice always take this into account effectively? Do home finding studies always afford the process calculated to help agency and prospective foster parents reach a reciprocal understanding truly in consonance with agency purpose? Does the day-by-day use of the "active" home always develop the teamwork between agency and foster parents that will be most useful to the child and his own parents? Teamwork implies clear knowledge and acceptance of certain well defined responsibilities. Are these always well enough defined for foster parents who must have relationships with parents, doctors, teachers and others, as well as with the child and the agency? Does the case worker always have the security in her knowledge and use of agency policies necessary to fulfilling her responsibilities?

What about the children selected for foster home care? Is the process of selection always valid? Are child and parent always ready for this particular service? Is it realistic zealously to seek the sort of understanding, the love tempered with wise objectivity, that the "misbehaving" youngster needs without facing the problems of paradox often inherent in such search?

If foster parents are to be called upon to share in the specialized service that boarding care has become, should there not be some re-examination, not only of agency policies and practice, but of the community's attitude towards these their public servants, and of the agency's responsibility for that attitude? We often hear that pay for foster parent service cannot be reckoned, that "Love is its own reward." We submit that foster parents who work responsibly with the agency and meet the heavy demands placed upon them are entitled to better status than they now enjoy and also to better pay. They should rightfully participate in the advances already achieved for cottage parents, a comparable group, whose important contributions to child welfare have at last become more generally recognized.

These are but a few of the questions arising inevitably from contemplation of the home finding scene. Perhaps agencies will send in their own answers—perhaps even send us more questions—in support of our concern with these problems.

The League recognizes that in the last decade baffling problems have made home finding a task of formidable proportions. Housing conditions, the lure

of industry, and more lately, new tensions in living, still undefined, often not consciously perceived, can be counted among the forces beyond our control operating against the spontaneous and free flowing applications of old. But we see other forces operating in the same way, forces that are *not* beyond our control because they spring from within the agency, from its community relationships, and from its concept of exactly what foster parents service really entails. We do not forget that finding foster homes in adequate numbers has never been easy. We do not forget that fighting baffling obstacles of one kind or another was always part and parcel of the job; this gives increasing strength to our belief that even under present-day conditions the fighting must go on.

We believe that homes are still to be found, homes that will be able to meet the challenge of changing conditions and changing needs. The saturation point will recede and eventually vanish as Boards and staffs grapple more realistically with their home-finding problems, as they must, if the potentialities of foster home services are to be realized.

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

### Regulation for Independent Free Home Placements

*THE plight of children placed by their parents, relatives or others, in "permanent free homes" without benefit of agency and with no state or local regulation of these homes, has long been a matter of concern to the child welfare field. Sometimes these can result in sound relationships, but all too often they are made impulsively and on the sole basis of expediency. Shadowy prospects for legal adoption fade out completely with time, and the child—often moved around from place to place—lives on in a legal No-Man's Land, thus denied that sense of belonging we continually stress as basic to every child's well-being. Frequently, he is shifted from one place to another, and unhappily becomes what Maud Morlock once called the "pillar-to-post child." Many communities are now alert to a new sense of responsibility for these placements and are considering ways of meeting this responsibility.*

*The following report from the Welfare Legislation Information Bureau of the State Charities Aid Association, New York, shows one way of working on the problem. The League would be interested in more news from the field on this subject.*

**F**OR the past year a State-wide Committee on Child Placement Legislation, composed of lay people

and social workers from Buffalo, Rochester, Niagara Falls, Elmira, Troy, Utica, Syracuse, Westchester County, and New York City, has been meeting in various parts of the State to consider the needs of children being placed in free homes for permanent care.

Although the Committee believes that the basic responsibility for the care, welfare and protection of children in the State of New York rests with their parents, near relatives, guardians, or with those who have the lawful custody of them at any particular time, the Committee is of the opinion that the State of New York has the authority, by the valid exercise of its police powers and in its capacity as *parens patriae*, to make all necessary and proper provisions for the care, welfare, and protection of all its children, both for the peace and safety of the State and for the benefit of the children themselves.

The Committee found that in spite of our good intentions, our well drafted laws, and our sympathetically and efficiently administered public and private agencies, there is, at present, no control or supervision of any kind over the free home in which a child is placed by a parent, legal guardian, or a relative within the second degree. This is so even if that placement is for the purpose of transferring complete and permanent care, custody, and control of a child to substitute parents, without the benefit of legal adoption or guardianship.

At present the Social Welfare Law provides that a person receiving a child for boarding purposes, no matter from whom received, must meet the standards and requirements set out in the rules of the State Board of Social Welfare and that his license or certificate to board children may be revoked for cause. The law also provides that no person except an authorized agency or a parent, legal guardian, or relative within the second degree may place out or board out a child. Since authorized agencies, and therefore their placements, are under the general supervision of the State Department of Social Welfare, it is apparent that the serious gap which now exists in New York's protection of her children is the uncontrolled and unsupervised placement of children in free homes by other than authorized agencies.

Although specific supporting statistics are not now available, knowledge of specific cases and broad familiarity with the problem of the unsupervised permanent placement of children in free homes convinced the Committee that many children who have been placed permanently in free homes are suffering so seriously under present practices that community action must be taken for their protection.

This general problem of permanent placement of children in free homes has been under study for some time and several legislative proposals were made in

the 1948 and 1949 sessions of the State Legislature. However, no general agreement was reached on any one bill.

The solution of this general problem is not an easy one. There must be a careful weighing of the many factors involved and what is agreed upon must be supplementary to and not in replacement of or in conflict with the powers and responsibilities which parents and courts, public officials and private social agencies now have.

The State-wide Committee on Child Placement Legislation has been working on this problem for over a year. It is now preparing a report and a concrete legislative proposal for the amendment of the Social Welfare Law to provide the necessary protection to children being permanently placed in free homes.

### Fellowships Overseas

Five Social Work Fellowships are available for American social workers for work, observation and study in France for 1950-51. Applicants must be mature, experienced social workers interested in getting practical knowledge in the following phases of social work in France: delinquency, group work, public welfare, medical social work and factory welfare. The fellowship offers room, board and tuition. Inquiries regarding these openings should be addressed to the Division of Specialized Personnel, Institute of International Education, 2 West 45 Street, New York 19. Deadline March 15, 1950.

The American Federation of the Soroptimist International Association has established a fellowship to be offered to an American woman in the field of social work, for study and observation in Belgium or one of the Scandinavian countries. Candidates must be graduates of a recognized school of social work and have had at least five years of professional experience. Candidates are expected to be able to show definite interest in furthering international cooperation in the field of social work. Competence in the language of the country in which the candidate wishes to study is also a requirement. Other qualifications being equal, applicants from the middle or far west will be given preference.

The fellowship carries a stipend of approximately \$3,000 and is tenable for one year, beginning in October, 1950. Application should be made to the Division of Specialized Personnel, Institute of International Education, 2 West 45 Street, New York 19, before March 15, 1950.

## LEAGUE CONFERENCE PLANS

### National Conference

Mr. Gunnar Dybwad, Supervisor Children's Division, Michigan State Department of Social Welfare, Lansing, Michigan, and Chairman of the League's program at the National Conference of Social Work to be held in Atlantic City April 23 to 29, 1950, announces that the Program Committee at present is working through two subcommittees. One is composed of people in four midwestern states and meeting with him; another is composed of the program committee members in the East, meeting with Miss Ora Pendleton, Director, the County Agency Department, Children's Aid Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, the Co-Chairman of the Program Committee. A meeting on research is being planned which will be jointly sponsored with the Social Research Group.

In line with the reorganization of the schedule for the entire National Conference of Social Work, the League meetings will be held all day Tuesday and all day Thursday, April 25 and 27, 1950.

### Regional Conferences

The Eastern Regional Conference will be held in New York City February 27 and 28, 1950, at the Roosevelt Hotel. The Chairman, Miss Margaret Barbee, Executive Director, Sheltering Arms Children's Service, New York City, announces that plans are under way for fifteen institutes on technical problems in children's services, and for a number of general sessions devoted to matters of particular interest to board members and administrators. In addition, a dinner meeting is to be held at which Dean Kenneth Johnson of the New York School of Social Work will be a guest speaker. Leonard Mayo, the League's President, will address the Tuesday luncheon meeting.

The New England Regional Conference will not be held this year. Those who planned to participate in that conference are invited to attend the Eastern Regional Conference. The program is being sent to all members and provisionals in the New England area. A copy is available on request.

The Southern Regional Conference will be held in Shreveport, Louisiana, and is scheduled for March 9, 10 and 11, 1950. Miss Inez M. Baker, Supervisor of the Children's Division, New Orleans Department of Public Welfare, is chairman.

The Central Regional Conference (formerly called the Ohio Valley Regional Conference) will be held in Toledo, Ohio, March 16, 17 and 18, 1950. Headquarters are at the Commodore Perry Hotel. Mr.

Wendell F. Johnson, Director, The Child and Family Agency of Toledo, is chairman.

The Midwest Regional Conference is scheduled to be held in Minneapolis June 5, 6 and 7, 1950. Headquarters will be the Nicollet Hotel. The chairman is Mr. Clark W. Blackburn, Executive Secretary, Family and Children's Service, Minneapolis.

## LEAGUE'S LENDING LIBRARY

*THE privilege of borrowing books, pamphlets and articles from the library of the Child Welfare League of America is a service available to members and provisionals. Material is loaned for two weeks, with renewal privileges for an additional two weeks. We list recent additions to our library, some of which have been reviewed in CHILD WELFARE in the last year.*

Chance to Belong, by Duane Robinson

The Challenge to Parenthood, by Rudolph Dreikurs, M.D.

Child Offenders, A Study in Diagnosis and Treatment, by Harriet L. Goldberg

Developmental Diagnosis, by Gesell and Amatruda  
Dynamics of Supervision under Functional Controls, by Virginia P. Robinson

Elmtown's Youth, by A. B. Hollingshead

Forty-Five in the Family: A Story of a Home for Children, by Eva Burmeister

A Handbook for Social Agency Administration, by Elwood Street

Handbook on Volunteers, by Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies

The Happy Home, by Agnes E. Benedict and Adele Franklin

Human Growth, by Dr. Lester Beck

Mental Health in Modern Society, by Thomas A. C. Rennie, M.D. and Luther E. Woodward, Ph.D.

Nancy Clark, Social Worker, by Cora Kasius

Parent and Child, by Catherine Mackenzie

Protecting our Children from Criminal Careers, by John R. Ellington

Psychotherapy in Child Guidance, by Gordon Hamilton

Rural Welfare Services, by Benson Y. Landis

The Selection and Admission of Students in a School of Social Work, by Margaret E. Bishop.  
Pamphlet

Social Work in a Revolutionary World, and other papers, by Kenneth L. M. Pray

State Child Labor Standards, by Lucy Manning and Norene Diamond. Bulletin No. 98, U. S. Department of Labor

Toward Public Understanding of Case Work, by Viola Paradise



## BOOK NOTES

MARY IRENE ATKINSON *SPEAKING FOR CHILDREN*, edited by Cheney C. Jones and Gertrude Springer. Parthenon Press, Nashville, Tenn. 1949. 192 pp. \$2.50.

These written words of Mary Irene Atkinson are a precious heritage. Friends will cherish them, social workers will find in them enrichment of their professional lore, and anyone who enjoys reading will be delighted with her spirited writing, her insight into human nature, and her sparkling humor, all of which make this book enduring literature.

We may be thankful that she was highly proficient in the two professions of journalism and social work, and that she found time to be effective in both. It was during those days of the depression in which she was working strenuously at the federal Children's Bureau that she took time to attend a hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee at which there was history-making consideration of the bill to enlarge the Supreme Court. Presenting her press card as representative of the Green Springs Echo, her home town paper in northern Ohio, she found herself the only woman reporter present, seated between men from the St. Louis Times-Star and the Raleigh News and Observer. Whether writing for the Echo, for which she prepared occasional columns, or for the Bulletin of the Child Welfare League of America, which she once edited, she often mixed pathos and humor as only an artist could. Her portrait of Jennie is one of about forty passages from the book which seemed suitable for quotation in this review. There are portraits of governors, generals and other distinguished citizens she came to know, but this about Jennie, first published in the Bulletin of the Child Welfare League, September, 1929, seems best to illustrate the variety in Miss Atkinson's writing.

Jennie, the colored maid who cleans the hotel room, is a small, middle-aged woman with grey hair and a deep soft voice, who moves as quietly as a shadow. She never seems to hurry, but she can straighten up a room in a jiffy.

"Jennie," I said to her one day, "what do the colored women who go out to work in this town do with their children?"

"Well, Miss," she replied, "they does jes' the best they can. There ain't no place here to leave them, and if there ain't no kin to help out or no neighbor, the women has to go to work an' let the children be by themselves.

"I know because my husband run off an' left me with a three months old baby an' one that could jes' walk. It's nearly twenty-five years ago now but I well remembers how I had to do. My baby was on the breast an' I had to wean him right away so I could go to work. I washed and ironed every day that I could get a place. I'd get up early and make a good fire. Then I'd shut the stove up tight so no sparks could fly out. I'd make a pallet on the floor for the baby since I was afraid he'd hurt himself if I left him on the bed. I'd leave his bottles settin' on the bench and the little one that could walk soon learned to give him one when he cried.

"All day they'd stay there alone. Once in awhile if my neighbor

heard them crying for long at a time she'd come in to see what was wrong. Many a night when I got home I found the two of them huddled up together sound asleep.

"It was a burden on me to leave my children that way. But all day as I done my work I prayed. I asked the Lord to take care of them for me. I didn't pray so folks could hear me as they'd most likely think I was crazy. But to myself I jes' kep' a' prayin'. An' the Lord did answer me for nothin' ever happened to them children. It helps a lot, Miss, if you can believe that the Lord will help you and protect your children."

I asked Jennie where the children were now.

"One is dead an' the other run off. I ain't heard nothin' of him for a long time. But sometime I reckon he'll get tired roamin' aroun' the world an' then he'll come back. Children makes a lot of trouble for you, but the happiest times I've ever seen was when my children was little and I could stay with them.

"It's funny about things. I got married again about ten years ago—married a honest Christian man an' he worked hard an' we had it good. But one day without no warnin' he jes' died. If he'd been no account like my first husband he'd a' lived. But he was a good man an' he died. Mostly the good men does die. Miss, I knows an' I'm tellin' you, they's mighty few good men left a' livin'."

The editors, both friends of Mary Irene Atkinson, have performed a great service to the many who will read this collection of her writings. The introduction by Cheney C. Jones and the editors' preface are as she would have had them. The rest of the book is entirely the writings of Mary Irene, as her friends came to call her, without profane interruptions. Thus we have a work which makes the candle of memory burn brighter and helps us to see through her eyes what it means to befriend children.

HOWARD W. HOPKIRK

RURAL WELFARE SERVICES, by Benson Y. Landis, Columbia Un. Press, N. Y., 1949, \$3.00.

In *Rural Welfare Services*, Dr. Landis presents a comprehensive but concise survey of the welfare services available in rural America. His material is factual, objective, and easy to read. This would seem to be an excellent book for child welfare workers who are beginning their experience in the less populous regions of our country. It will serve to make the workers already familiar with the hinterlands more aware of the changes and programs of which they are a part.

Dr. Landis lays the background for this survey by devoting several chapters to a description of rural life today. Significant changes are taking place. For one thing, as a nation we are becoming less rural. For another, the standard of living and per capita income are both rising. Even so, Dr. Landis is convincing in his efforts to show that largely because of their economic limitations, rural communities are unable to provide the welfare services needed by the people. The part that Federal Funds, made available

through the Social Security Act, have played is clearly pointed up in every area. Even with Federal Funds, there is still a great difference in the welfare, health, and social security programs in the urban and rural areas. Without the impetus of Federal Funds there is even a greater disparity as shown in the figures for general relief. The states which are classified as rural lag far behind the urban states.

A large portion of Dr. Landis' book is devoted to those programs both public and private which are national in character and which provide service to people regardless of where they live. The public welfare and health programs are described in detail. Some analysis as to the adequacy of services in the public programs is also given. The programs of the national private agencies, such as the American Red Cross, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, etc., are touched upon briefly, the material used coming from agency reports without comments from the author. In any event, these sections provide an adequate directory of agencies whose services extend to the "social work frontiers" of rural America.

One of the valuable features of this book is the author's recommendations as to how social welfare services may be extended to reach all of our people.

Recognizing the economic problem faced by the more rural and poorer states, Dr. Landis points up the need for additional Federal Funds for welfare, health, education, and insurance programs. Local funds do not exist to meet the many needs. He also believes it pertinent to re-evaluate the county as the local unit of administration. This is particularly true in the fields of social service and health. Perhaps a larger administrative unit would decrease cost while improving facilities and services. He suggests that private agencies should extend their programs and there should be greater cooperation between all groups. National and State programs should include provisions for all people—urban, rural or migratory. This can only be done with careful preparation and planning.

Although Dr. Landis is objective and factual, there breaks through from time to time a genuine feeling for and appreciation of rural life. Those of us who have experienced the thrill of working together on the local, county, and state levels know the many rewards to be found in participating in the growth of rural welfare services.

SARA P. RICKS,

*Director Division of Child Welfare,  
Mississippi State Department of Public Welfare*

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